

• **From:** EarthsDotter@aol.com

Sent: Wednesday, November 19, 2003 11:05 AM

To: Russell, Ellen

Subject: Protect and Serve

My comments: I expect you to do what is right.....period. The time is way passed for cleaving to old and harmful ways. If even one human being is being harmed, then something has to be done to stop whatever is causing the harm. As a public servant, it is your duty to serve and protect. Do so. Thank you, Walt and Toni Medford, 11924 NW 39 Avenue, Gainesville FL 32606-4915

Department of Energy Seeks Public Comment on Mexican Power Imports Environmental groups sued demanding US-run plants should meet US environmental standards

November 6th, 2003

Contact Info:

Marcello Mollo or Martin Wagner, Earthjustice, 510-550-6700

Julia A. Olson, Wild Earth Advocates, 510-663-2868

Bill Powers, Border Power Plant Working Group, 619-295-2072

San Diego, CA-- The US Department of Energy last week announced in the Federal Register that it will carry out a full environmental impact statement (EIS), the most comprehensive environmental and health review, of the new power plants run by US-firms located just across the US border with Mexico. These plants were built largely to feed power to the US power grid.

Last July, a federal judge in San Diego ruled that the Department of Energy did not adequately assess the health and environmental threats posed by the SEMPRA and InterGen power plants located in Mexicali, Mexico. Federal law requires such study before the agency can permit the importation of power from Mexico for sale in the United States. Judge Irma Gonzalez ordered the agency to carry out further study, but did not specify the scope of such study.

The San Diego-based Border Power Plants Working Group, represented by Wild Earth Advocates and Earthjustice, argued in federal court that the agency should consider public health and environmental impacts caused by these plants. The Department of Energy, with the announcement of a full EIS, agrees this study is required.

"Comprehensive impact review is critical when you consider that the children of Imperial County, California suffer from one of the highest asthma rates in the nation," said Bill Powers of Border Power Plant Working Group.

As instructed by Judge Gonzalez, DOE will conduct its study based on the environmental and health conditions existing before this controversy began.

"DOE is finally getting the message that it cannot allow big business to pollute our air and water without regard to health and environmental standards," said Marcello Mollo, an attorney with Earthjustice, representing Border Power Plant Working Group.

Although about 3 years behind schedule, DOE will take a hard look at less harmful options before allowing these companies to continue polluting the air and water.

"It is a shame the agency didn't do the job right in the first place," said Julia Olson, an attorney with Wild Earth Advocates, "But the public should be comforted to know that the courts have intervened to force the agency to do its job."

Public Comment Period Open - DOE has requested that any written comments on the health or environmental impacts of the project be received or postmarked by December 1, 2003, and submitted to:

Mrs. Ellen Russell

Office of Fossil Energy (FE-27)

U.S. Department of Energy

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Earthjustice is a non-profit public interest law firm dedicated to protecting the magnificent places, natural resources, and wildlife of this earth and to defending the right of all people to a healthy environment. We bring about far-reaching change by enforcing and strengthening environmental laws on behalf of hundreds of organizations and communities.